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Congress of the United States
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July 22, 2014

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The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Received & Inspected

AUG 04 2014

FCC Mail Room

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

Earlier this month, I met with constituents who had voiced concerns about the content of television advertising on children-specific cable channels. As a father and grandfather, I am disappointed that the practice of targeting children for inappropriate products, such as erectile dysfunction medications, has been deemed acceptable by both cable companies and the Federal Communications Committee (FCC).

While I understand the need for television advertising as a way to sell various products, it is regrettable to see our government allows for the exploitation of young children solely for the purposes of companies making a profit. As a supporter of the First Amendment and free speech, I realize these commercials may not rise to the level of indecency that warrants censorship from the FCC. However, it is my hope your agency would do everything it can to offer significant oversight of networks and the content they choose to broadcast to targeted children audiences.

Your prompt attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

September 26, 2014

The Honorable Robert Pittenger
U.S. House of Representatives
224 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Pittenger:

Thank you for your letter expressing concerns regarding TV advertising content and its impact on children. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your constituents' concerns and provide you with information regarding the Commission's authority and oversight.

As you note, the Commission's authority to regulate content on cable channels is limited. Our indecent programming rules apply only to broadcast television and radio stations, not to cable channel programming. However, cable operators are required to limit the amount of advertising time within programs that are intended for children, but there are no restrictions on the type of advertising.

Consumers have the power to choose not to watch the channels that have the content that they find objectionable and seek out the noncommercial broadcast and cable channels that also offer programming for children. In addition to "voting with their feet" (or their remotes), consumers also should consider communicating their concerns and complaints directly to the cable programmers involved, as this is often an effective catalyst for change. Finally, the Commission maintains a website (<http://reboot.fcc.gov/parents>) that provides an array of information to assist parents in addressing concerns regarding the communications services that are available to children, including broadcast, cable, and online content. The information provided there may be of use to your constituents. I assure you that the Commission will continue to remain engaged in protecting children and enforcing our rules.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler